

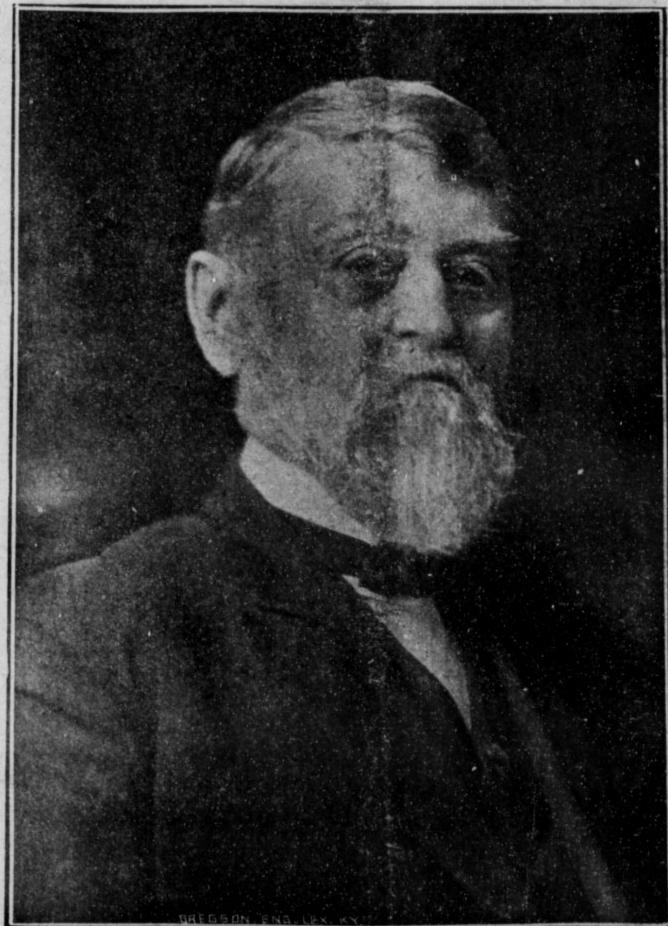
BLUE GRASS BLADE

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DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT



DR. T. J. BOWLES
Freethought Writer and Blade Contributor

DR. T. J. BOWLES

With the labor of nearly half a century behind him for the greater development of liberty of conscience and rationalistic thought; with a mind still actively engaged in the eradication of superstition through intelligent discussion; with still greater possibilities confronting him during the remaining years of his active life, the subject of this sketch, Dr. T. J. Bowles, of Muncie, Indiana, stands as a bright meteor illuminating the pathway of humanity to a still higher and nobler state of human progression. Moved by a kindly impulse towards others, at a very early age, he refused to recognize the rights of kingcraft and priesthood, as claimed by the votaries of superstition, and assumed the laudable task of destroying the deadly upas tree root and branch.

Dr. T. J. Bowles was born in Milroy, Rush County, Indiana, on the 24th day of July, 1836, and will, therefore, be 72 years of age this year. In his veins, drawn from his father's side, flows the sturdy Anglo-Saxon blood and that English love of liberty made itself manifest in him. From his mother, being of German ancestry, he inherited that rugged and fearless honesty that is characteristic of the Teutonic race. Both of his parents were born on America soil. They first saw the light of day in Kentucky, near the city of Lexington, but emigrated to Indiana in 1832, four years before Dr. Bowles was born. From that day Dr. Bowles has made his home in the great Hoosier state and he has practiced medicine, his chosen profession therein, from the day he graduated until the present.

Upon reaching young manhood, Dr. Bowles looked upon life from varied aspects. His early education was obtained in the common, public schools of Indiana, and upon leaving these invaluable institutions, he spent a period of three years as a clerk in a dry-goods store. This did not satisfy him. He then began to teach school and still his mind, craving for higher opportunities, remained unsatisfied. Taking up his own inclinations he attended the Fairview Academy, founded by the celebrated educator, Prof. A. R. Burton, of Bethany, Virginia, and graduating from this institution, while still a young man, he entered the University of Cincinnati for a course in the study of medicine. Honors beset him here and he further supplemented his medical studies by receiving further instruction in Bellevue College, New York, and the Rush Medical College, of Chicago. His studies over, he went to Muncie, Indiana, where he embarked in the practice of his chosen profession and the balance of his life has been spent in the alleviation of human suffering through the practice of medicine.

It has often been said that as between the lawyers and the doctors, the latter are more firmly in possession of that knowledge which enables them to discard superstition, while the former are invariably on the side of their client, right or wrong. In any event it is certain that the study of physiology, biology, anatomy, and the various branches of medical science, prepared

the mind of Dr. Bowles for the vigorous onslaughts he has made against superstition, and many of these have appeared from time to time in the Blade. His great mentality and splendid vigor has been given to the cause of humanity without a solitary selfish thought. Although actively engaged in his professional work, at the advanced age of 71 years, he still furnishes frequent contributions to the Freethought press and the Blade has been especially favored in this respect. His Persistence of Superstition articles have wrought considerable favorable comment from many of our readers. For four years, during the administration of President Benjamin Harrison, he was pension-surgeon, for the city of Muncie, and this is the only public office he has ever held, seeking none.

The popularity of Dr. Bowles, with the Freethinkers of the middle-west, resulted in his election, twice, as President of the National Liberal Party, and he labored diligently for its success. Although one of the original organizers of the Republican party, he has, for many years, been absolutely independent in politics. For some time he remained loyal to the party to which he helped to give birth, but to use his own language, he abandoned it because, "it became thoroughly corrupted by the priesthood and plutocracy."

For the last decade, or more, Dr. Bowles has been a frequent contributor to the rationalistic journals of the United States, and he is now engaged, with Prof. T. B. Wakeman, of Cos Cob, Conn.; in the joint production of a book upon the subject of "Superstition and Scientific Religion." Dr. Bowles has undertaken to furnish the manuscript for the chapters upon Superstition, while Prof. Wakeman will contribute the chapters upon the part of Scientific Religion. He has also created considerable discussion in his own community by frequent articles upon social, religious and political topics published in the papers of Muncie. In this issue of the Blade will be found a continuation of his articles on Superstition which we have no doubt our readers will again enjoy.

During his mature life, Dr. Bowles has been a Monist, or in other words, a disciple of Prof. Ernst Haeckel. This is an acknowledgement of the Oneness of the Universe, a confession of materialism and absolute Freethought. His religious beliefs, or unbeliefs, as we may term them, are summed up in the following personal expression. He says:—

"I have constantly sought to establish in the minds of my fellowmen that the Universe embodies all causes and all effects, and that divine revelations are unmitigated frauds, and that the priests of superstition are the worst enemies of the human race."

This bold declaration places him among the leading advanced thinkers of the world, and we do not doubt that many, if not all of our readers, will join in wishing for Dr. Bowles a long and useful life, brightened by rays of genial sunshine, warmed and cheered by gratitude and love.

Persistence of Superstition

Priests are Paid to Promote Ante-Mortem and Post-Mortem Welfare of Ghosts.

(By Dr. T. J. Bowles).

Among primitive men and among all savage tribes the belief was universal that all men have a double or soul which goes out of the body at death, and lingers in the neighborhood, or remains near the scenes of its life in the flesh, during its earthly sojourn.

This absurd and silly belief was so firmly

fixed in the minds of all primitive and savage people that the practice of placing food on the graves of the dead for the use of the soul or spirit was universal, and this practice still prevails among all savage tribes.

In a modified form through the power of heredity and tradition and vested interests this belief still largely prevails among civilized people, and while food is not placed upon the graves of the dead for the use of the ghosts, a priesthood is paid and main-

tained to look after the ante-mortem and post-mortem welfare of ghosts.

In organic nature there are two great forces, heredity and environment; the power of heredity preserves the form of organized bodies and also the customs, laws, beliefs, superstitions and ceremonies of past ages; slowly and almost imperceptibly the power of environment by adaptation modifies and changes the laws, usages and superstitions of past ages, and progress is thus achieved.

When we learn the physiological functions of heredity and adaptation in organic nature we can clearly perceive, why it is that the absurd superstitions of our remote ancestors still linger among us, in spite of the advancement and demonstrations of science.

Even while I am writing this article the priests of this beautiful little city are speaking to crowded houses and celebrating an event that never happened in the history of this world; as long as the pagodas and joss-houses can be filled with men and women in the celebration of the immaculate birth, death and resurrection of a God a high plane of civilization and happiness can never be reached on the earth; this priesthood has been one of the most deadly enemies of the human race, and if mankind could have escaped this awful curse all the nations of the globe would now be filled with happy men, happy women and happy children, and a golden cestus of clasped hands, would encircle the whole earth; this is as it should be today, and this is as it will be in the future, when the priests of superstition are all buried in that vast cemetery called the past, and their memories shrouded in oblivion.

Man can weigh the earth on which we live—foretell with exactness the coming of eclipses, and compute with accuracy the distance to the sun, moon and stars, but all the mathematicians in the world cannot estimate the ocean of tears and blood, that the priesthood has wrung from unnumbered millions of the human race.

There is no tongue nor pen that can embody in speech the ruin it has wrought, the countries it has wrecked, and the lives it has blasted; a simple enumeration of the crimes committed by the priests of superstition would fill a volume a thousand times larger than the "Holy Book" of fith and fables, from which they derive their authority to rule and enslave mankind.

The whole history of the priests of superstition from Constantine the monster, and John Calvin the murderer down to this very hour, has been written in blood, and full of unspeakable sorrow and agony for the whole human family.

The worst tyranny that has ever oppressed the toiling millions of the earth has been perpetrated by the priests of superstition in the name and for the glory of a fabulous God.

For a thousand years their constant employment was the assassination of grand men and noble women, and had it not been for the Volneys, and the Voltaires, and their immortal co-workers, this would still be their occupation today; there is still, however, one kind of torture that the priests of superstition are constantly inflicting upon all good men and all good wo-

men, who have been emancipated from their savage superstitions; they have gloated for so many ages over bleeding victims, that the spirit of assassination has become hereditary to them, and they are now engaged in assassinating the reputation and happiness of all good men and all good women, who refuse to aid them in their diabolical work; they denounce moral men and moral women who repudiate their superstitions, and constantly seek to place them under a social ban and close all avenues against their advancement and preferment; they pack political conventions with hypocrites to fill the offices of the state and nation; they combine against the employment of teachers and against all aspirants for place and position, who are imbued with the sacred love of science and rationalism.

In every neighborhood, hamlet, village and city in christendom, this method of torture is constantly practiced today by the priests of superstition, and thousands of grand men and noble women are living a life of bitterness and sorrow, that is worse than death by fire and sword or by flame and fagots.

souls, grand men and noble women have

During all this midnight darkness that hung like a funeral pall over this beautiful earth for fifteen hundred years, great arisen, and sacrificed their lives in heroic efforts to rid the world of these hideous and horrid monsters.

Among this immortal number of heroes the whole human race owes an infinite debt of gratitude to Thomas Paine and his illustrious compeer, Thomas Jefferson; previous to their day hope and happiness had fled from the earth; previous to their day the whole world was in chains; previous to their day the priests of superstition had their fiendish clutch upon the throat of humanity—poverty and rags, filth and faith, war, pestilence, famine, tears and sorrow were the common heritage of the whole human family.

In this midnight darkness they placed a star of hope in the sky, and gave to the world a government of the people, by the people, and for the people; the marvelous victory of the toiling millions of the earth won by Paine and Jefferson over the priests of superstition, left the smoldering fires of hate and revenge in their heart, and they are now plotting and organizing their forces to destroy the republic of Paine and Jefferson, and tear down our glorious flag of freedom.

They love the bloody banner of the cross that has been wet with tears and stained with blood for fifteen hundred years; they hate the tricolored flag of our republic; they hate it because it stands for liberty; they hate it because it is a menace to every priest of superstition in the world; they hate it because it divorces supersti-

tion and government; they hate it because it was placed in the sky by three of the most illustrious haters of superstition that ever lived in the world, Paine, Jefferson and Franklin; they hate it because it has extracted the teeth of the tiger of superstition, and removed the fangs of this diabolical serpent; they hate this glorious republic because its glorious constitution gives to every man and every woman the right to embrace or reject every superstition according to the dictates of their own conscience; they hate it because it has abolished the instruments of priestly torture; they hate it because it has robbed them of power and in time will compel them to earn an honest livelihood.

Whoever persuades himself to believe that any priest of superstition will ever become reconciled to a free government like ours has read history with no profit, for by an irreversible and unrepealable law a priest of superstition is precisely the same today that he was in the days of Constantine, the monster; precisely the same today that he was in the days of St. Cyril, the Alexandrian bishop of superstition who killed with stones and clubs the beautiful and learned Hypatia, and burned her body to ashes; a priest of superstition is precisely the same today that he was in the days when the immortal Servetus was burned to death over a slow fire by the infamous John Calvin; he is precisely the same today that he was in the days of the immortal Bruno, whose body was burned to ashes by the priests of superstition, because he enlarged the boundary of human knowledge; the priest of superstition is precisely the same today that he was in the days of Copernicus and Galileo, whose lives were made wretched and miserable because they flooded the world with the sacred light of science.

A priest of superstition never changes, and he cannot change any more than the leopard can change his spots; he longs and prays and plots for the establishment of the kingdom of Jesus Christ upon earth, officered from constable up to president by the priests of superstition, and I shudder when I reflect that there are still millions of ignorant men and women bound in the fetters forged by this hydra-headed monster.

It thus becomes apparent that the highest office and the most sacred duty of enlightened men and educated women is to labor persistently for the spread of Rationalism, for only in this way can progress be hastened and superstition banished from the earth.

How long! O, how long will it yet be before mankind will learn that manacles for the limbs and fetters for the brain have always been forged by the priests of superstition.

From the Confessional

(By Fr. Hans Kirchsteiger.)
(Translated for the Blade.)

The following has been translated from the original publication in Austrian, expressly for the Blade and sent to us by a friend. It first appeared in the "Salzburger Watch."

The "Cronicle" laments the fact that Mr. Kirchsteiger did not speak at the meeting of the anti-clericals in the Kurhouse. For this pain of the "Cronicle" we fortunately have a good remedy. Although Kirchsteiger did not speak in the Kurhouse, we will give vent to his opinions in our paper by printing an article of his which has been copied from the "Fessel" by nearly all the freedom loving papers of Austria. Mr. Kirchsteiger could not have proclaimed the truth more loudly in the Kurhouse.

When I published my romance, "das Beichtsiegel," two years ago, the entire clerical and Christian social press pounced upon the book declaring that the Beichtsiegel (confessional) did not advocate secrecy nearly so strictly as I had represented in my book. I have founded the book only on those teachings, which the regent of the Seminary, Dr. Placolm, and the professor of morals, Angermeyer, taught. The clerical and Christian social papers, all the editors of which are priests, declare that the confessional is to be considered just as stringent as these papers consider the command of brotherly love. And they ought to know since they are only the speaking mediums of the bishops, and in fact the bishop of Liuz through his press condemned the book in the most raving terms. Even Rome declared itself for the Beichtsiegel and corroborated the statements of the clerical press. Therefore I consider myself justified as a priest before God and the holy church to publish experiences in the confessional for the benefit of thousands of unfortunate people.

A terrible disturbance is now raging in Austria concerning a single paragraph in the civil lawbook. It is paragraph 111. I will say no more about this paragraph nor the means, which are used to uphold this paragraph and in this way to enforce morality. But if one has occupied the confessional for twenty years, he knows that under the disguise of virtue entirely different things occur. Flies are cast away but elephants are swallowed with the best of appetite. But what do we priests care for sin where our power is concerned?

Whosoever reads a liberal or social democratic paper is condemned, whoever eats a sausage on Friday is accursed but the blood-sucker is dismissed from the confession with three Lord's prayers and one

even feels flattered that the church is honored by such high standing people. But enough of this. Much more important is the confession of those priests, who thunder with such vim against the annulling of a paragraph of the civil law-book. For twenty years many priests have knelt before me to confess as other ordinary people.

That we are all human and act as human beings is a truth, which all mock holiness can not overthrow. But so much the more unjust is it, if we make ourselves judges over others, who are morally much cleaner than we, although they are separates whom the law forces to sin. Does not a law cause us priests continually to sin? The law of celibacy? Whoever cares to deny this has not occupied the confessional for twenty years, nor has he heard the confession of many priests and of many more victims of the lusts of priests. Priests whom I considered holy, were thus manifested as poor, weak, human beings.

I must have had the confidence of many, for women came to me to confess, who had not confessed for five or ten years because their sins were so black which they had committed with priests that they were ashamed to confess them. Women of all ages, who sinned with priests. But what kind of sin? Sins which one oftentimes does not hear for a whole year from the mouth of common people. Awful seemed to me the confession of a woman 24 years of age, whom I had to prepare for death. She had to die although yet very young. The priest with whom she had stayed brought the disease from the city, and she was not the only victim of this priest, but her sister who was three years younger was also brought to the parsonage as kitchen maid, and both sisters had to serve the priest at the same time. I make special mention of this case out of hundreds because this priest is publicly considered as the most solid pillar of clericalism, honored by his bishop, because this priest is one of the most diligent coworkers with the clerical and Christian social papers, because this priest is one of the most earnest defenders of the old marriage law and has gathered over a thousand subscriptions against the marriage reform. I must not give his name because I know him from the holy confession.

But one may say that he admits a single priest might fall. By virtue of a twenty year's practice in the confessional, I say "No, this priest is no exception—in fact I have found no exceptions." All the priests who came to me to confess—but that would be saying the least—but all the women and

girls and boys. My God, my God, who would believe it that celibacy requires such victims! May the Pope be ever so infallible, may he live ever so virtuously, twenty years, I'll give my oath upon it, he would say: No, so many sins of priests, so much mischief, so much heartache I cannot justify before God, and therefore do away with celibacy."

But what are the conditions in the cloisters? I have not heard a cloister brother confess. But from places where cloisters are women and girls came to confess and told things, which convinced me of the fact that the cloistermantle was equally as powerless to prevent sin as the gown of the priest. And oftentimes much less so, which is no wonder. The ordinary priest must often battle with want and worry, many a one must even suffer hunger. But in the rich cloisters the stomach is treated to so much choice food that the heart also declines to go hungry. The holy scripture itself says: "In vino luxuria"—in wine there is licentiousness. And in the cloisters there is certainly no lack of good wines.

I shall never forget a certain confession. The confessional was a railway car in which I happened alone to meet a very young but very sad girl. Intense sympathy besides the grace of God must have put the words into my mouth, because this hardly more than a child told me that she was going to Liuz to drown herself in the Danube since she was in the family way from Father N. God must have helped me to persuade her to give up the suicidal project and never did I absolve anyone with so much feeling as this child now saved in body and soul.

It is one consolation that not all girls misled by priests take the situation so seriously. Most of them are much more resolute. I know a priest who was an earnest collaborator with the clerical press and a raving enemy of the marriage law reform. I had made up my mind that he must be a veritable ascetic, an exception to the rule. I looked up to him in awe as to a new Aloisius. But it wasn't long until six women came to me to confess and said that they had committed sin with this very priest. And not once but for years. And these six were not Sisters of Charity but fresh farmer girls. But how about the sisters? If one wishes to hear the confession of these, he must certainly have a good stomach. Not all sisters sin with priests but all are in love with priests even to the extent of self pollution at the thought of the priest.

But the priest may be in ever such a high standing, he remains human. Even the golden cross on his breast doesn't make him an angel. Many priests have their nieces as cooks. But what about the

nieces? This chapter were too long. I shall only mention a case where it were not a niece but an own sister by real blood relationship. The call of nature may become so strong that even a priest will sin with his own sister. I should reach no end were I to relate all my experiences in the confessional. But this will suffice to how forth those men, who from a glass house, throw stones at their fellowmen. These are the men who with the beam in their own eye are pointing with great zeal at the splinter in their neighbor's eye.

And now for a close after so much filth a little picture which allows us to breathe a purer atmosphere. I was at one time chaplain of a large charge. And since this is no secret I may give the name of the place, Aspach. At that place there labored in the best sense of the word a priest, who was not only in the church but in the entire surrounding country held in great esteem. When I came there as chaplain this priest had passed to his reward but in all the houses I found his picture and all the people spoke in lauding terms of this worthy priest. And yet all, even the children, knew that he had lived with his cook as man and wife and was father of several children. And he was a good father; one of his sons became canon in Liuz, the other a professor of the cathedral, Kremsmeister, and a daughter the wife of a respected doctor in Liuz. The father need not be ashamed of his children and the children were not ashamed of their father and the entire congregation was proud of their priest with his two priest-sons and were none the less attentive when these sons assisted their father in important ceremonies at the altar. The church of Aspach was also a typical church of true religion and morality. And after him came a priest who had neither wife nor children and still he was not beloved by the church. He was a candidate for the Landtag, but the brave farmers of his own parish for the most part cast their votes against him.

But enough of the misery of the human priests. But their own weakness should cause the priest to sympathize with their fellowmen, and if they can't raise themselves up out of the filth into which celibacy has cast them, they should at least not keep those who are divorced from a lawful marriage. But strange though it be, the deeper some people are sticking in their own dirt, the more impudently they will throw slurs at all honest advocates of a so much needed reform of our civil marriage law. By virtue of my long experience as father confessor I could say a hundred times more, and shall do so if this does not suffice to shut the filthy mouths of the enemies of progress and humanity.

Just a Little Brushing Up Of a Famous Couplet by Cowper.

(By John F. Clarke.)

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest saint upon his knees."

—Cowper.

Christians have the happy faculty of making proverbs that are not proverbial. "The fear of God is the beginning of Wisdom." When Satan sees the weakest saintess kneeling he begins to fear God and wisdom gives him the palsy and he shakes. Just how Mr. Cowper got his misinformation is hard to tell. He certainly never saw Satan rubber-necking the weakest saint at her orisons. He wanted to make an epigram and show off his orthodox piety and ne let his pen trace the first queer stuff that his toxic brain exhumed from the musty tomes of nescience. If the saintess had pretty ankles, perhaps Satan was not trembling at the result of the prayer, but hoping for a prolonging thereof. When it is prettily well established that the prayerful efforts of the strongest of the "faithful" availleth nothing, we are surprised at Mr. Cowper's statement. Perhaps when Satan prays the weakest saint will take notice.

Weak saints are likely weak in the knees, weak in the head, and weak in heart. Satan is said to reside in a place where weak and strong saints do not resort to kneeling.

Cowper's witticism falls flat, and yet it is quoted and re-quoted as an inspired treasure. If Satan is omnipresent, he sees many weak saints on their knees and he is kept trembling like an aspen leaf. Why should the weakest saint pray? Who is she? Why does she not become strong? Why does Satan tremble? Does he fear that God will forget himself and give heed to a prayer at some time? Does he fear that the prayer's answer will be inimical to Satan? Cowper looms up before me as a fool of large dimensions. God must have trembled when Satan sent the chariots of iron after his chosen. God's armies always have saints pray before battle and yet God's warriors usually come off second best. Icons were thicker than bullets in the late war between Russia and Japan. Saints strutted and called upon God to help the Russians do something to Japan but the superior guns of the Japs were too much for God to overcome. Weak Gods, weak answers, and weak saints, weak prayers are not calculated to do more than make Satan shake with laughter. After writing such a beautiful sentiment, I expect clapping of hands and flapping of wings. The angel rooster crowed like

Democratic roosters after a favorable election to the sainted memory of Old Hickory Jackson. I have no doubt that the hen angels all cackled and engaged in fuss and feather demonstrations.

All the she saints claimed to be the heroine of Cowper's bon mot. Cowper's faith only resulted in making one bigoted damphool of the namby-pamby order. Cowper is now engaged in hatching out angel eggs under the goose that laid the china eggs. Do the saints wear Merry-Widow hats in heaven.

WHY I AM A FREETHINKER?

(By A. B. Bennett.)

First—Because we know nothing, can know nothing, have never known anything of any future existence, although I would not deprive any man or woman of the satisfaction or enjoyment they may possess from an honest and sincere belief in a future state.

Second—That orthodox Christianity is founded upon a barbarous custom of sacrifice, or burnt offerings, which is inconsistent with this, our twentieth century intelligence, and, as a premium, we are offered the blood and body of Jesus as a means of remission of sin. Is not this both barbarous, revolting and demoralizing to the average man or woman?

Third—Because if I cannot be a true man without eating the body or drinking the imaginary blood of an imaginary human being, I am not worthy the name of a man. Why should we worship at the shrine of supernatural cults, born of murder, in an age of ignorance and superstition, more than two thousand years ago?

A certain Scottish soul-saver was pained and astonished to see that his wife had fallen asleep during one of his most eloquent sermons. He paused in his discourse, and thus addressed by name his erring spouse, whom the silence had awakened. "I did no," he said "marry ye for money, as ye keen weel; and I did no marry ye for your looks, as all folks may see; so if ye have no grace to listen to my sermons, I doubt I ha'e made a sair bargain."

Said a distinguished politician to his son: "Look at me! I began as an alderman, and here I am at the top of the tree; and what is my reward? Why, when I die my son will be the greatest rascal in the city."

The Son—"Yes dad, when you die, but not till then."

Current Comment on Public Events

NO CHRISTIANS NEED APPLY.

Don't be a sissy!

There is nothing like manliness and independence!

The unctuousness of an "Awmen" is no longer a synonym for a square deal and a truly Christian character is no longer regarded as a certificate for industry.

But a few short years ago it was the proud boast of the church organizations, through its hired professors, that a young man with a church record could secure employment at any time and place in preference to an applicant who did not belong to church. For a season the preachers were justified in making such a claim for the employers of labor had not been able to profit to any extent from the lessons of experience. Now things have changed and the good-goody young man is consigned to Hades, or, to a much warmer climate than Los Angeles, while the sinner gets the pie. The cloak of orthodox profession has been used to cover many sins but the Captains of Industry are now getting suspicious of the too much piety sort of a man. The sinner has triumphed over the saint and the church has been compelled to get on its knees and beg for what it terms a "square deal" or, that its members shall be placed upon an equality with the men who do not belong to church.

This innovation comes from the far West. The scene is laid in Los Angeles and the setting is a large building that is in course of construction for the benefit of the Y. M. C. A. It was naturally supposed that the members of that Protestant Jesuit band would be given the preference in the matter of employment and a number of them tried to work the church racket in demanding it. The plan failed, for out of two hundred men employed on the building there is not a professing Christian among them, and what is more, the General Superintendent, C. B. Weaver, is out with a published statement to the effect that he will not employ one of them if he knows it. This has raised a howl from the church element but it is noticed that Superintendent Weaver is a man of his word and means exactly what he says. Religion may satisfy a lot of hysterical women and a few babies but when it comes to business the horse takes on another and different hue. Too much professing piety in a man now forces the impression that he is a "sissy" and employers have no use for him. This indicates the clear trend of modern thought

and shows the attitude of the secular and business world towards saintly professions. But read what the Superintendent has said. It reads in part:

"I can get twenty-five per cent more work out of sinners than I can out of saints and I shall finish the job with men making no profession of faith. There is not a Christian man on the job now so far as I know. When I began I had a few Christians but they didn't deliver the goods. They were a sissy lot of fellows who thought that because they belonged to the church they ought to get the soft end of everything, so I fired 'em."

Such a statement may not be orthodox but it is good, common sense, and the business community will applaud it. Professions of great piety no longer insures a soft snap. The saint hath no pre-eminence over the sinner and as between men the latter is given the preference. The day has been a long time coming but it is here at last and congratulations are extended to Superintendent Weaver. From Old Kentucky we extend him the glad hand and the promise of good fellowship should he ever strike this section.

A GHASTLY JOKE.

It is not recorded that when the Nazarene climbed the hillside to deliver his famous sermon, he carefully laid a side the short end of a cigarette. Jesus may not have smoked cigarettes but that is no reason why his representatives should not do so. The New Testament, nor the old one, for that matter, places any inhibition upon the cigarette. The church canon is silent on that subject. Yet, it is reported that Pope Pius X is not only an inveterate cigarette smoker, but that he actually uses the Turkish brand and can indulge in a sanctified joke about them. The cigarette has long been associated with the silk lady and the sooner necktie, striped socks, and tanshoes, that it comes a trifle hard for us to bring our deep pious nature to that point wherein we can readily believe that the Vicar of God on earth and Vice-Regent of Jesus, can perform his sanctimonious duties with a cigarette stuck between his teeth. This may be a sacrilege, or blasphemy, for aught we know, but we are not responsible for the statement, as the reports coming via Madrid, in news dispatches of the day, declare that the Pope really enjoys a Turkish cigarette and can joke upon the subject by insisting that he

has so far been unable to Christianize them.

The report states that the Bishop of Acequi recently called upon the Pope and the latter asked the Bishop to dine with him. He did so. At the close of the meal the Pope lit a Turkish cigarette and the dispatches give the following as to what was said and done:

"The Pope asked the Bishop to dine with him. After dinner His Holiness really smoked Turkish cigarettes, to which he is very partial.

The Bishop, noticing the kind of tobacco, said:

"Does Your Holiness really smoke Turkish cigarettes?"

"Yes, my dear friend," answered the Pope, smiling. "Up to this time I have been unable to Christianize them."

"Other terms, other jests," adds the Bishop, in telling the story. "A few hundred years ago the Pope would have said, 'I cannot Christianize them, so I burn them.'"

The ghastly sentiment contained in the last two lines of the quotation is but too literally true. It was intended as a joke about the nationality and religious pretensions of the worshippers of Allah, but it is not so very long ago, in the measure of time, when another Pope caused a human being to be burned because he had failed to Christianize him. That burning took place within view of the papal residence and to this day a monument marks the spot upon which Giordano Bruno gave his young and glorious life to the cause of metal liberty. If we cannot Christianize them we burn them. The very expression indicates what finds lodgment in the minds of these prelates of the Christian church. It is but an echo from the past and the smoldering fires of religious massacre are still there. It is not a crime to smoke a cigarette and even the Pope of Rome may indulge, if he is so inclined, but it is the ghastliness of the joke to which special attention is so desired, for in so serious an undertaking as the wilful destruction of human life, the pious can look on unaffected.

SECRETS OF CONFESSIONAL.

While the laws hold that some communications are of an especially privileged character and may not be divulged in the interests of justice, yet the law is not universal. If some family physician told all they knew the divorce courts would be kept on a continual grind for years to come and many a lawyer could ruin enormous business interests were he required to give testimony concerning communications made to him of a personal and confidential business nature. For many years, in fact from the days of the ecclesiastical courts, the communications made to a priest in the form

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of a confession, or even to a Protestant minister, were also held to be privileged and need not be divulged in a court of law under legal process of compulsion. Many decisions have been rendered in the English courts upon this subject, which, though not altogether uniform, have generally upheld the secrecy of the confessional. American cases are published where the same doctrine has been upheld, based upon the common law. In a majority of the American states statutory provisions have been made for the protection of such communications and, as a general rule, the person to whom such confessions are made, are not required to divulge them for legal purposes. Common law states have invariably made such provisions, but through a discussion that is now taking place in the Chicago Record-Herald it appears that the State of Illinois is without such statutory provision and being to all intents and purposes a Common law state, the secrets of the confessional may be brought out before any legal tribunal requiring them to be given as a matter of evidence in the trial of a cause. As a matter of course, or necessity, the Common Law is silent upon such a question, but the text writers upon common law agree that a communication between a clergyman and a penitent is not privileged, and the clergyman may be required to testify concerning any confession made to him under any and all circumstances.

One can readily understand the necessity for such a rule. During the days of religious and political intrigue, when nations and individual in the same nation, were at variance upon matters of ecclesiasticism and political policies connected therewith; when Catholicism and Protestantism were at the dagger's point in a struggle for supremacy and power, secrets of state, secrets of families were desired to be protected, and the folly of confessing to any human being was thus radically exposed. Modern jurisprudence has held a high regard for the sacredness of the confessional and the several attempts that have been made to break through the veil that enshrouds the secrets thus told have failed. But according to Joseph B. David, an eminent Illinois lawyer, it is made to appear by a chain of legal authority, that in that State, at least, the confessional, or communications made to the priest therein, are not privileged. And it should be so. No man should be placed higher than the law. To admit of one man having the power to receive and withhold a communication affecting the rights, the character, the honor and integrity of another, in a land where the law is supposed to be supreme, is neither good policy or good morals. Of course, every confidential communication should be allowed to stand upon its own

merits, but it is not to be supposed for a single moment that a clergyman, of any faith or denomination has any right to withhold information from a court of law. A requirement that such information be given, if demanded, is not in violation of the constitutional provision of religious liberty, and it is with regret that we note the announcement of the preparation of a bill for presentation before the next General Assembly of Illinois providing that communications made to clergymen, doctors, lawyers and editors in their official or professional capacity, be held to be privileged and shall not be communicated under legal process.

Carrying out this process to its legitimate conclusion it would, in the course of time, work a difficulty in securing testimony in matters of litigation and embarrass the courts in their own work.

BULLING THE MARKET.

Cherry pie is getting expensive.

At an average cost of \$875 a throw it is getting beyond the reach of our pocket book, and but few persons will be capable of indulging in the luscious fruit at such a price.

It is reported from Hants, England, through London dispatches to the American papers, that a preacher by the name of Thomas Edge, wrote a number of love-letters to a fair, young milliner, named Miss Mary Potter, in which he called her his "Cherry Pie" and insisted that mistletoe was altogether unnecessary for the osculatory pastime as those "kisses which you can get at any time" are far more preferable. Following the usual course of such affairs there came a promise to marry. The young milliner prepared her trousseau and when the appointed day arrived she found that her reverend suitor had jilted her and a suit for damages was promptly entered against him with the result that the lady got a judgment for \$875.

The only defense made, it is said, was that while the parson appreciated the goodness and warm affection of the lady he had promised to marry, he had suddenly discovered that she was not his "affinity" and we opine that the lady is lucky to have made the discovery in ample time to prevent further disaster. The denouement in this case brings to mind the often quoted words of Tennyson, when he wrote:

"He will hold thee, when his passion shall have spent its novel force."

Something better than his dogs, a little dearer than his horse."

According to the same reports the judgment is almost without value except as a vindication, for while John Wesley is reported to have owned five silver teaspoons, a bible and the sum of \$50 with

which to bury him, this preacher owned nothing more than a handful of books and a bicycle, the latter, evidently, not being built for two.

AT GOD'S COMMAND!

Folly and religion ever runs together hand in hand. When the immortal Puck said—"what fools these mortals be"—he evidently had his mind's eye upon the religious and saintly fanatics of his day and age. Extreme piety never wrought strength of character or mind. The most pious the more imbecile. This rule is invariable. Under such a depressing influence men and women will maim and injure themselves in such horrible fashion as to induce special legislation against all religious influences that could possibly inspire acts of self-mutilation. From the Flagellantes in France, to the Penitentes in Mexico, and down to the demented creatures existing in our Anglo-Saxon civilization, self-tortures are inflicted, supposedly at god's command, and yet there are still fools who will continue to worship at such a shrine.

From Newcastle, Indiana, it is reported that Eugene McDowell, a former city official, believing that he had heard the voice and warning of god while in a state of mental depression and aberration, actually cut off one of his fingers with an axe, insisting that god had required him to make such a sacrifice as a warning to sinners. While reason reigned the monstrous brutality growing from religious influences could not have led him to the commission of such an act. No sooner had reason been dethroned than the sanguinary elements of that bloody, Christian faith, the demands made for self-wounding, self-sacrifice and self-torture, made its impression upon his weakened mind and intellect and the mutilation followed.

Now the question arises can there be anything of value in a religious system that could even lead an idiot to commit such an act? The effect in this case is too serious to admit of any jest. It demands a most serious consideration. Unable to reason the thing to a natural conclusion, the sinister influences of a morbid religion brought to the surface the very worst elements of human nature and the craving for blood cropped out. Born in blood, propagated by the shedding of blood, the Christian religion still demands blood as an evidence of great faith and a sure passport to the New Jerusalem. The sooner we can rid the earth of Christianity the better for Humanity.

When answering any of the Blade's advertisements don't neglect to mention the paper.

BLUE GRASS BLADE.

BLUE GRASS BLADE

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

By mail, postpaid... \$1.50 per year, in advance.
Five new yearly subscribers at one remittance, 1.80 each.
Five trial subscriptions sent in with one remittance, for six months, 50 cents each.
Trial subscriptions 15 cents per month.
Foreign subscriptions, postpaid, \$2.00 per year.

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One inch, single column, 1 insertion, 50 cents;
one month, or four insertions, \$1.00; six months
\$5.00; one year \$8.00.
Quarter column, single, one insertion, \$2.00;
one month \$4.00; six months \$20.00; one year
\$30.00.

Half column, whole column, or larger advertisements at special rates upon application.

The publishers have the right to reject any and all advertisements offered.

GENERAL BUSINESS RULES.

ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS to the Blade will be discontinued at the expiration of the term for which the subscription has been paid up in advance. The address slip on the paper will show subscribers the date of expiration of subscription. Back numbers, or numbers omitted will be sent, if asked for, upon renewal in case of discontinuance.

SHOULD ANY SUBSCRIBER change his or her address advise this office, giving both old and new address, as desired.

THE OFFICE of publication of the Blade is at 126-128 North Limestone Street, Lexington, Kentucky, to which all Freethinkers will be given a hearty welcome.

THE BLADE is entered at the Postoffice at Lexington, Kentucky, as second-class mailing matter.

ADDRESS ALL COMMUNICATIONS TO THE
BLUE GRASS BLADE, P. O. Box 293,
Lexington, Ky.

Editorial

CHRISTIAN HYPOCRISY AT THE GRAVE.

Freethought is life and action.

Christianity is a coffin and the hearse.

The professors of the orthodox faith, by frequent argument, have admitted that Freethought may be all right to live by, but Christianity is needed when men come to die.

Freethought is willing to accept the distinction thus conferred upon it, for if a man or woman live "all right" they need not be concerned or alarmed regarding the mode and manner of dying. To live "all right" enables one to die "all right." We are all interested in living. We all know that we have life and that to all who have life, death must come. Life is the beginning of individual consciousness.

Death is the end. As there was nothing, for the individual, before the individual life was, so there will be nothing for the individual when death ensues.

The foregoing thoughts have been occasioned by the recent receipt of a communication informing us of the demise of one of our enthusiastic subscribers, with a request, from a lady member of his family, presumably wife or daughter, that the Blade discontinue to his recent address. The tone of the letter indicates that this particular member of the dead subscriber's household, did not agree with him in his views, and it discloses the further fact that she did not take very kindly to his reading our paper. Among other things, the writer of the Epistle says:—

"Please allow me to say that he enjoyed the paper while he was in health, but when sickness and death came it offered him no comfort. The Christian religion and the prayers of a Christian minister gave him more comfort than can be found in your paper."

More was said along the same lines, but the foregoing is enough. It admits that while the deceased was in health and strength, in full possession of his mental faculties, capable of the use of his reason, he actually "enjoyed" the paper, and the carrion crows of the death chamber could not influence or turn him from his known and accepted views upon religion. It also admits that when the poor, tired brain failed to properly perform the function of thought, when mind and body were both enfeebled, the women members of his household, aided by a "Christian Minister" undertook to wring a confession of faith from the parched lips and by such an act they sought to prove to the world that the dead man had lived a lie and another conversion to the Christian faith is announced.

The church is welcome to all such converts, save for the slander that his family have allowed to be perpetrated upon his name and memory. Even in death Freethinkers are not safe from assault. Christian ghouls have, 'ere this, penetrated the grave to make a holy vengeance upon an inoffensive and helpless corpse. What wonder, then, that like a thief in the night, these Christian ghouls will penetrate the chamber of death and by cruel tricks, without the consent or knowledge of the dying, indulge in the hollow mockery of prayer at such a season, and the slightest twitch of the lips, whether of approval or disapproval, is accepted as a renunciation of an intellectual plane of thought and

construed as an acceptance of that religious faith which he had previously spurned.

In a great measure Freethinkers are responsible for these things. Too many fail to make proper provision for such an emergency. Very few have done so. Anticipating such a contrempts in the case of death, care should be taken to guard against it during active life by having preparations made in advance. There is nothing grewsome about it. We must all die. We all realize that. The same end awaits us all and the Blade advises its subscribers, friends and readers to be fully prepared so that when the grim reaper makes his call they will not be subjected to the humiliating disgrace that befall the dead man in the present instance.

The letter we have received furnishes the best sort of argument in favor of Freethought. It admits, by implication, that the Christian religion is fitted only for children, intellectual imbeciles, and persons in the throes of death. In this instance the dead man, "while he was in health" actually "enjoyed" the Blade, and the logical inference is that when he became unable to enjoy it, his reasoning powers had failed, his mentality had ceased, he was "as a little child again" and a fit subject for a "Christian Minister" to work off his prayers and faith upon.

Ah, friends, could he have known and realized what was taking place around him in those moments of flitting life, there would have been precious little comfort in the Christian religion, or in the prayers of that Christian minister, for those gathered about him, and while we dislike to say harsh things in the presence of death, yet we regard the incident here related as an insult to the intelligence of the man now dead.

Write down the names and addresses of your friends, that is, your liberal friends, and send to us and we will try a sample copy or two on them.

The principal objection made by orthodox professors against the theory of evolution as applied to the Cosmos is that they do not like it. The objection counts for very little because it will be applied thusly in spite of their likes or dislikes. When the Master Minds of the world undertook to demonstrate the Oneness of the Universe there was no thought of trying to please the clerical objectors. Evolution was and is even though the powers of heaven and hell combine against it.

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WHAT THE SCHOOL WILL TEACH.

Believing that a future explanation of the important branches of Natural Sciences which are proposed to be taught through the Correspondence School would aid in demonstrating its great value as a means of spreading useful knowledge, the following outline of the comparative studies to be undertaken will be found both interesting and instructive.

It is only when we come in contact with such important facts in nature that we stand aghast at what confronts us. We become surprised at how little we really knew before. Sir Thomas Huxley declared that the "great benefit which a scientific education bestows, whether as training, or as knowledge, is dependent upon the extent to which the mind of the student is brought into immediate contact with facts, upon the degree to which he learns the habit of appealing directly to nature."

The purpose of the school is to bring the student directly to nature and by a comprehensive study of known and demonstrable fact to offer means of conscious culture and intellectual development. Briefly summing up the situation we now present the following:

CLASSIFICATION.

The province of Natural History is to describe, compare and classify all natural objects. These objects, as we have previously shown, are divided into the organic and inorganic, or those which are, and those which are not, the products of life. Biology is the science of the former and Mineralogy the science of the latter. Biology again separates into Botany, the Natural History of Plants, and Zoology, the natural history of animals. Mineralogy divides into Mineralogy proper, or the science of mineral species, and Lithology, or the science of mineral aggregates of rocks. Geology in that comprehensive knowledge of the earth's structure and development which rests upon the whole doctrines of Natural History.

But few are capable of realizing the inherent beauty and great value that lies in a scientific education. Upon this subject Prof. Ernst Haeckel says: "An educated person who knows the elements of Geology will never experience ennui. He will find everywhere in surrounding nature, in the rocks and in the water, in the desert and on the mountains, the most instructive stimuli to reflection. More important still is the fact that a knowledge of Geology brings its owner into an irreconcilable attitude towards the dogmas of the church."

SURVEY OF GEOLOGY.

Geology has firmly established the chronological order of the sedimentary rocks. This was its first great triumph. The order of chronological succession determined, the next important step was to deduce their age from the thickness of the strata, and then to determine the relative date of their formation.

According to modern tables there are five distinct geological ages, each distinguished from the other by internal characteristics. The relative duration of each age and the depth of the prevailing formation can now be given with a fair degree of accuracy.

These geological ages may be classified as follows:—

Archeozoic, or primordial; **Paleozoic**, or primary; **Mesozoic**, or secondary; **Cenozoic**, or tertiary; **Anthropozoic**, or quaternary.

Following each age through its subdivisions and noting its fossilifera, its comparative depth in the earth's crust and its probable age, we find the following:—

Archeozoic—divided into the Laurentian, Huronian and Cambrian. In none of these have fossil remains of vertebrates been found, hence, the natural and logical deduction that vertebrates did not, and could not, exist during any of these periods of sedimentary formation. The approximate length of this period is placed at 52 millions of years and its strata is estimated at a thickness of 63,000 feet. Fossil remains of invertebrates are found in the Cambrian deposits.

Paleozoic—divided into four periods, being the Silurian, Devonian, Carboniferous and Permian. This is known as the age of fishes and reptilia. In the Silurian are found evidences of the first vertebrates,—fishes; in the Devonian, dipneusts; in the Carboniferous, amphibia; in the Permian, reptiles. The estimated age is placed at 34,000,000 years and the depth of strata at 41,200 feet.

Mesozoic—Three periods, namely,—Theasic, Jurassic and Cretaceous. In the first of these subdivisions are found the Montremes, the next Marsupials, and in the third Mallotheria, or the pro-Placentals. Its age is estimated at 11 million years and the depth of the strata at 12,000 feet.

Cenozoic — Four divisions — Being the Eocene, Oligocene, Miocene and Pliocene. This is the age of mammals and in the last of these subdivisions man like forms appeared. The characteristic fossils of each period are Lemurs in the Eocene, Baboons in the Oligocene, Simians in the Miocene, and the Ape man in the Pliocene. The estimated age is 3 million years and the thickness of strata is placed at 3,600 feet.

Anthropozoic—Two divisions—Glacial and Post-glacial. In the first we find pre-

historic man and in the second both savage and civilized man. The age of this period is given at 300,000 years and with but little thickness of strata and considerable variations.

ZOOLOGY.

In many respects, Zoology may be described as the most extensive of all the sciences. Its field is a world of varied forms. To determine their origin and development, their structure, habits, distribution, and mutual relations, is the work of the Zoologist. So numerous and far reaching are the aspects under which the animal world may be contemplated that the general science is beyond the grasp of any one person. Special departments in Zoology have arisen, and, in its comprehensive sense, it is the combined result of the labors of many workers, each pursuing his studies in his own particular line.

First we have Structural Zoology which treats of the organization of animals. In this department are embraced Anatomy, which considers the constitution and construction of the animal frame; and Physiology, which is the study of the apparatus in action. The former is separated into Embryology, which is a study of the successive modifications through which an animal passes in its development from the egg to the adult state, and Morphology, which includes a study of all mature animals, or, the form and arrangement of their organs.

Comparative Zoology is the comparison of the anatomy and physiology of all animals. It is in this department that the labors of science has led to the grand generalizations as the unity of structure amidst a diversity of form.

Systematic Zoology is the classification of animals, or a study of animals, as to their kinds, giving to each a distinctive name and description.

Distributive Zoology is the knowledge of the successive appearance of animals in the order of time, which also includes the geographical and physical distribution of animals, living or extinct, over the surface of the earth.

Theoretical Zoology is the provisional mode of grouping facts and interpreting them, some of which still stand waiting at the gate of science. These are the theories which deal with the origin of animal life and the origin of species.

Included in this branch of Science are Entomology, the study of insects; Herpetology, the study of reptiles; Ornithology, the study of birds; Anthropology, the study of man. In addition to these may also be given Osteology, the study of bones; Odontography, the study of teeth; and Neurotomy, the study of nerves.

THE CONFESSIONAL.

From time almost immemorial the devotees of superstition and orthodoxy have maintained a system of espionage upon the conduct of their non-clerical brethren through the medium of a confessional and in this manner has the individual power of the priesthood been multiplied and strengthened. Political and personal secrets have been laid bare and in many instances have the innermost recesses of the human heart been explored by these self-constituted confessors.

Many of our readers will be well aware of the fact that numerous exposes have been made in the public prints, but, as a rule, these have come from men and women, who, once firm believers in the virtue of the confessional, for some private or personal reason had renounced the faith and were engaged in a systematic assault upon their former associates. We have escaped nuns and monks, converted priests and priestesses, all taking the public platform, and for special hire, engaging in making known their opposition to the confessional and giving reasons therefor. As a rule these attacks come from Protestant sources and small weight have been given to such authority. Their arguments and presentations lacked that moral force necessary to serious affect and as a result their missions proved failures.

In this issue of the Blade is an article reproduced from the original print in Prussian, the translation being paid for by a friend of the Blade and sent here for publication. This article is of an unusual character. It does not emanate from one who has been unfrocked or who has abandoned his particular form of faith. It comes from a devout Catholic priest still in the exercise of his ecclesiastical functions and in charge of a large church in Austria. Its apparent cause is from a strenuous campaign in favor of a reform in the civil marriage law which is designed to enable persons once married and divorced to marry again and to make such marriage recognizable by the church authorities. Being of such a character it is vastly different than the common run of such articles and the startling experiences it relates are worthy of the utmost consideration.

There is something pathetic, deeply sentimental and touching in the facts as there given. It offers an unanswerable argument against the law of celibacy imposed upon the priesthood and

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shows how flagrantly and openly that law is violated. Young girls and even female relatives, the latter closely affiliated by ties of blood, are unsafe in face of such an institution and the Blade is especially grateful to the friend who has thus interested himself to the extent of having the translation made. We have the original print in Prussian for examination at any time should it ever be needed for examination and comparison.

Side by side with this expose comes a little paper entitled "World-wide Missions" published in New York, which, commenting upon the use of the confessional in Mexico, says:

"It is in morals here, as in other countries where it has long held sway, but the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church is most at fault. If it were really holy and inculcated holiness and morality of the people would indicate it. It lifts faith high above morals; but that faith is spurious which does not lift morals to its own plane. Salvation in sin seems to be the practical idea of the church, not so much in acts committed against the moral law as in offenses against the creed. A morally corrupt priesthood gives sanction to a morally corrupt laity. A clergy solemnly committed to life-long celibacy gives the lie to its vows by its unbridled license. A dying priest told his physician that if he could choose among the professions again he would elect to be a priest, for, said he, "we have all the gold we need and the pick of the women."

When one considers the fact that these assaults upon sex morality are not exclusive to the Catholic priesthood alone, but that a large number of protestant ministers are guilty of like offenses, we are forced to the conclusion that the Christian church, including all its sects and denominations, is morally rotten and corrupt, and we must redouble our efforts to deprive it of power and privilege.

KEEP RUST OFF THE MIND.

An endorsement of the Correspondence School, its method and scope of instruction is given by Tomorrow Magazine, in its May number, as follows:

"We are pleased to note that our friends of the Blue Grass Blade, Mr. Hughes and Mr. Charlesworth have organized a correspondence school which covers a wide range of subjects, including zoology, geology, astronomy, general science, secular and sacred history, etc. The school offers exceptional opportunities for men and women to

avail themselves of an education by mail and keep the mind alert and growing instead of rusting. We wish our friends the success they deserve."

Coming from such a source, the Blade feels highly gratified as showing that a popular vein has been struck. We believe that such a propaganda will open new vistas to the progressive work of Freethought.

FAITH; FLOWERS; INFIDELITY

In a recent issue of the Duncan Banner, published at Duncan, Oklahoma, which has been forwarded by a friend there appeared an article under the somewhat captious title "Flowers of Faith vs. Infidelity" attributed to some person by the name of Austin Callan, and supposed to have been previously published in Remarks and Arrow, whatever that may mean. The article is beautifully worded but a careful perusal leads to the conclusion that it strongly resembles a pleasant dream in which fanciful pictures appear to find upon waking that it was but a figment of the mind, a mirage, a mere guess in the dark, and entirely without substance.

And where are the "flowers of faith? Faith hath no flowers. Faith is allied with cloistered walls, the cross of agony and despair, the dead and the dying, and its very form is made lurid with the glare of hell's fire. Faith subscribes to a fanciful, but revengeful, god and it fills the eyes with tears, the heart with pain, and the life with gloom. If during its long career it was ever able to boast a few flowers they were artificial and turned to Dead Sea fruit in the hands of men and women. Faith is the prison-house of the mind and flowers do not belong in a penitentiary. Faith has been and is yet the charnel house of nations and individuals in which are cremated the best thought of the ages, and flowers do not find a place amid such surroundings.

Interested advocates are ever and always inclined to lay claim to the good, the true and the beautiful in life and assert that it belongs to and is a part of Christianity. The very devotees of the Christian form of superstition give the lie to any divine message. Its fashionable pulpits simply minister to languid minds. Its practices are but the cultivation of foolish fads, a social clearing house, and an aesthetic fore-court to hell. Of what service can flowers be under such conditions?

The writer of the article assumes

that a complete answer to Infidelity is to be found in the "twinkling stars," the "songs of birds" and the beauty of a setting sun. Vain fool! Those very twinkling stars and the feathered songsters of the meadows and valleys, that very sun and the perfumed air of spring; the song of the mocking bird thrilling to its mate from a tree-top; the drowsy, drunken hum of the honey-bee; the growing corn, in fact the whole of Nature denies the audacious claims of Christianity, displaces God, wipes out angel hosts, and brands the fable of a resurrected man-diety as monstrous fiction to mislead fools. Compared with Christianity the doctrine of Infidelity is as a bright oasis in some dreary, barren desert. There is no sentiment, there are no flowers in nursing a delusion and hugging it to your breast. There is no despair, nothing cold in sleep, and what matters it whether we sleep for a night or forever. Once asleep we miss nothing, know nothing, lose nothing if we never wake again. Superstition creates imbecility and disease, then builds some place of charity for its alleviation and declares with pride that it is a ministering angel. Remove the conditions and the charity would not need. Kill Christianity, by any intelligent means possible, and the gloom that now hangs over human life will speedily disappear.

Again, reference is made to the "institutions of learning" that are supposed to have been erected through Christian belief. This is erroneous. When in the full zenith of its political power the Christian church would not tolerate a school, a college or a university. It destroyed all with which it came in contact. It burned the Alexandrian library and put the scholars of the world to rout. Every forward movement in education all over the world has been made in spite of Christianity and not because of it. Education is secular. It is decidedly irreligious. It knows no religion or religious sentiment. The sacrament is not to be found in the multiplication table, nor does the Lord's prayer find strength from a study of natural law, in cause and effect. Only in the last few years has the church displayed any consideration for education, and at that the education stood for, advocated and encouraged by the cult has been of such a character as to subserve its selfish interests and against the welfare of the human race.

Flowers of Faith! What a misnomer! Faith has produced more poiso-

PROF. WAKEMAN ON THE SCHOOL.

Cos Cob, Conn., April 25, E. M., 308.

I am right glad you are where you are and ought to have been long ago. May your Scientific and Philosophical Correspondence School succeed. If I can help you let me know.

THADDEUS B. WAKEMAN.

ANTIDOTE FOR SUPERSTITION.

Correspondence School Receives Magnificent Endorsement—Assurance Given To Prospective Pupils.

Natural knowledge or an acquaintance with the sciences of the different departments of Nature, organic and inorganic is a complete and perfect antidote to every form of superstition, and your contemplated school, to teach the natural sciences by correspondence, is deserving of all praise and commendation.

In my judgment it is the very best method of propaganda work, and if the Freethought Press of the United States can establish schools conducted in the manner which you propose, it would not be long until the Priests would be compelled to earn an honest living, in some useful occupation.

I sincerely hope that you may secure a class of several hundred pupils, and I can assure your pupils, that the course of instruction which you propose to give, will be more valuable, than they would get at any of the universities.

Yours always,
T. J. BOWLES.

oned arrows and barbed points, swords, bayonets and cannon balls for the destruction of humanity, than aught else in all its history.

There is one thing, however, we wish to suggest to the author of this article, and that is, whenever he desires to cull "flowers" of human thought with which to enrich his writings, let him give credit to Ingoldsby from whom he has stolen them and used in quotation without credit being given. In this very act the author has shown by demonstration how Christianity will steal the best there is in life and lay claim to it as its own.

Our splendid premium offer should be an inducement to friends of the Blade to do a little work in its behalf. With a club of five subscribers at one dollar each, we will send you Dog Fennel, or a trip to Rome, free.

Above all, friends, don't overlook our Correspondence School. It is making a hard fight to obtain a foothold and this can be won by your help and co-operation. If you know of a young man or woman of average intelligence,

inclined to Liberal Views, call their attention to the School and exploit the opportunities it has to offer.

Three years instruction in science and philosophy for twenty-five dollars or one year for ten dollars is an offer seldom met with. Remember what Mrs. Closz had to say about the "missed opportunities."

Your attention is directed to the Blade's proposition to double its circulation this year. If each subscriber would sign the blank at the bottom of the last page, or send in the additional fifty cents when renewing, with a new subscriber, the good work will soon be done. If you think the Blade deserves it then it should be an easy matter for you.

Another demand has been made for the Blade containing Mrs. Henry's second article on the Bible. The orgies of that Angel of the Lord were certainly interesting.

Is Mars Inhabited?

(Concluded from last week.)

the same vegetation; only two-fifths as much to grow the same animal body or to move it a given distance; only two-fifths as much energy will be required to produce any phenomena whatsoever. Hence, it will be necessary to receive only two-fifths as much heat from the sun to support animal and vegetable life. From this we infer that it may be and must be removed from the sun a sufficient distance to receive approximately this amount.

As the quantity of energy received from the sun, varies inversely with the square of its distance, in order to receive the same relative energy, Mars should be removed to a distance of one hundred and forty-one million miles, so, instead of receiving only the necessary forty per cent of the earth's heat, it really receives about forty-three per cent. Hence, it is, relatively speaking, slightly warmer than our planet. From these data we may formulate the following law.—

Other conditions being favorable, the habitability of a planet requires that its surface gravity be inversely proportional to the square of its distance from the sun.

With Mars this ratio is almost perfect, i. e. its surface gravity and its solar distance are, according to the law just given, almost exactly proportional to the surface gravity and solar distance of the earth, the slight variation shown, being no greater than would be caused by the eccentricity of the planet's orbit, or by a slight difference of latitude.

Now, having shown that the temperature of Mars is such as to render animal and vegetable life entirely possible, let us consider how other conditions, so far as we know them, may bear upon the probability.

The surface of our own planet consists of three-fourths water to one-fourth land. On Mars this order is reversed and the ratio is much greater. Perhaps nine-tenths of its surface is land. There are no great seas from which water may be evaporated, hence, rain may be forever impossible.

Small quantities of water may be deposited in the polar regions in the form of snow during the long winters. This will melt when the pole is again turned toward the sun, the water coursing through narrow channels towards the tropical regions. These channels may be and probably are very small and there may be a large number of them running side by side or nearly so, thus irrigating portions of the desert surface. Between these parallel channels and for some distance outside of each group or system, vegetation would spring up and flourish during the summer season, to disappear again with the return of winter.

That these marks, or so-called canals are visible only in the summer season, and wholly invisible in winter, are facts well known to astronomers, and for which, as Prof. Lowell clearly shows, the growth and decay of vegetation will furnish a simple explanation. A possible objection to this idea may be raised on the ground that vegetation should be visible in the tropical regions at all seasons, since no winter exists there. This objection is based on conditions as they exist in the tropical regions of our own planet, conditions that cannot possibly exist on Mars. A tropical climate like that of Brazil has its wet season and its dry season with occasional rains in the so-called dry seasons. On Mars there is probably but one tropical season, the dry.

How much vegetation is there in the unwatered parts of the Sahara Desert and how much would be left in the valley of the Nile, should that river dry completely away for a part of the year?

The fact that these presumed strips of vegetation are in the form of straight lines, lends color to the theory that they may be due to the efforts of intelligent creatures who are obliged to make the best of scanty water supply. It is certainly easy to suppose that where these irrigating channels intersect, their influence would be more extended, and larger bunches of vegetation would appear, and we can say with equal certainty that where vegetable life is possible, animal life is also possible.

Again, these marks or strips of vegetation are arranged with a degree of geometrical precision that would seem to preclude the possibility of their being due wholly to the operations of unassisted Nature. Of course, Nature makes straight lines when bodies are contracting and cooling, and in the formation of ice crystals, but if we undertake to explain the marking on Mars by this hypothesis, we shall require these markings to appear in winter and disappear in summer instead of the contrary as they persist in doing, and we shall also have to object to their retaining the same appearance, season after season. As they refuse to appear in winter instead of summer, and as they insist on preserving the same general appearance at each recurrence, we shall have to abandon the freezing idea and allow a certain amount of intelligent control and direction of Nature's forces to be an absolute necessity. But if these markings on the surface of our neighbor planet, are in reality, vegetation, why are they thus confined to strips? Why should not the entire surface be equally productive? Why should there be such a large proportion of desert waste

and so little productive soil? These questions are answered by their supposition that Mars is older than our earth by untold ages, not in actual time, alone but in its advanced geological condition. Being a smaller body, the geological changes are necessarily more rapid. We know that on our own planet, the land is slowly rising out of the sea, or that the sea is slowly but surely settling into the land, the probable explanation of which is that the water is steadily entering into its solidified form, that the quantity of water as such, is steadily diminishing. This process will continue until the earth is a dead and dried up world as the moon is to-day. This loss of water has progressed at a rate until a very small per cent of a former great volume now exists. As there are no large seas from which to obtain water by evaporation, it is probable that not a particle of rain ever falls and water is disseminated by irrigation only, evaporated and returned to the poles as snow during the winter. The vastly larger portion of the planet's surface may, in past ages have been the beds of great seas, but is now a desert waste where no life of any kind can possibly exist.

In those past ages the entire surface may have teemed with life of many kinds. Land and sea monsters may have struggled for supremacy, while one more intelligent class of creatures may have succeeded in subduing all others to its will. This race may have attained intellectual heights unknown and undreamed of here. Beings developed and perfected by an evolutionary progress necessarily much more rapid than our own, may have reached a state of grandeur far beyond the flights of the most vivid imagination. If so, it is a past glory.

I have said that the planet is older than the earth. Mars is not a dead but a dying world. This is evident from several facts. Its water has largely disappeared. Its animal and vegetable life, if they exist, are confined to very small portions of its surface. Also, in its ceaseless march toward the sun, it has passed the point where its distance would cause its temperature to correspond to that of the earth. Its tardy revolution on its axis, is also evident that great seas existed in past ages and the tides thereon checked its rotation until its period is longer than that of the earth. Other things being equal, the larger planets yield more slowly to the resisting power of tides, by reason of their greater weight, but Mars, being a smaller body, its tides had more rapid effect. Loss of water and loss of velocity in rotation, must be taken as evidences of great age.

It has been said that if an ordinary man should be transported to Mars, he would promptly freeze solid. This is a mistake. Should our earth increase its gravity at

surface to that of Jupiter, a man would have to maintain a body of temperature of 150 degrees to 175 degrees or be chilled to death. On Mars, his temperature of 98 degrees would be above the boiling point and he would burn every thing he might touch, even if his internal pressure did not cause him to explode in a three or four pound atmosphere. At least he would have to reduce his body temperature to about 25 degrees or 30 degrees Fahr.

At this point we may ask, What other planets of our system are inhabited? Not one. Apart from the earth and Mars, the necessary relation between surface gravity and solar distance is wanting in every one. Of Neptune and Uranus, but little is known but that the amount of energy received from the sun is many times too small, can be mathematically demonstrated. Saturn has a surface gravity one-fifth greater than the earth and should therefore receive one-fifth more energy, whereas it actually receives but one nineteenth part. Ere it can support life it must form a solid crust and contract its body to about half its present diameter, when it will have a density equal to that of the earth. Its surface gravity will then be nearly five times that of our planet, hence it will require nearly five times as much heat which means that it must advance towards the sun until it is distant only 42,000,000 miles. We are at present, considering surface gravity and solar distance only, assuming that other things are equal. Much the same may be said of Jupiter, to attain the earth's density, it must reduce its diameter to 54,000 miles. Then its surface gravity will be seven times that of the earth and it will therefore, require seven times as much energy from the sun to render it habitable. This means that its solar distance must be reduced to thirty-five million miles, which also belongs to the far distant future.

The surface gravity of Venus is four-fifths that of the earth, hence it should be removed to a distance of a hundred and three million miles from the sun. It would then receive the proper amount of heat or energy to support life, whereas it actually receives two and a half times that much, consequently, its mean temperature must be continually above its boiling point. This is corroborated by the presence of immense clouds of vapor, probably steam, which forever hide its surface. Besides this, the terrible tides which it must have suffered, have destroyed its rotation and it continually presents the same side to the sun. No life, animal or vegetable can exist on Venus. Mercury is probably a dead world, having neither air nor water, baked and parched by the intense solar heat, waiting only to add its remains to the great crematory of the worlds.

Now, one more thought. Are there inhabited worlds outside our system? Undoubtedly there are millions but they are still the exceptional few, whose surface gravities bear the necessary relation to their distances from the great fountains of

energy around which they revolve. Stellar space is known to be crowded with dark bodies, most of which are immature or dead worlds, but some must furnish the necessary conditions for animal life.

The Blade's Correspondence

Lauds Mrs. Henry's Article.

WICKFORD, R. I.—Herewith find \$1.00 to apply on my subscription. I will send \$1.00 per week until my account is balanced.

Please inform me as to the sum I shall send you for 12 or 15 copies of the Blade containing Mrs. Henry's article on "Bible revision." I want them for missionary work among the heathen orthodox in this vicinity. I wish them put in wrappers and addressed as I shall direct when I hear from you through enclosed stamped envelope. I am sorry that I am not able to lift the hat and salute Mrs. Henry in person.—E. I. ROFFEE.

Interested in the Cause.

You will find enclosed a very interesting article, clipped from the Tribune. I think it is the most far-reaching that I ever read. I would like it to be published in all Free-thought papers.—S. P. HUFF.

From a 15 year old Lad

DEXTER, TEXAS.—Enclosed I send some newspaper clippings. I do not know whether they are of any value, but if so make use of them. I have read several copies of the Blade and like the paper very much.

Although I am an atheist, I don't understand just how it is that the soul dies when the body does. I reason thus, that to live is the result of life. Nobody can live without life. But what is life? As nothing is here that can be destroyed (the body is not after death—it simply changes to dirt) I don't see how it is that the soul can be either. From what I know (or think) it seems to me that the various currents of the brain and system are either electricity or something closely resembling that substance. But as to the Bible, I have read it and various fairy tales and find them very amusing. To use a favorite expression, "It's good for them that likes it."

According to the Bible, when God swapped knowledge and reason to Adam for the garden of Eden it seems to me that humanity is now old enough to make use of this bargain.

WILMINGTON, VT.—I call you friend for I am always inspired by that feeling toward the glorified few that are emancipated from the thralldom of old superstitions and are out in the clear, white light of Science and Reason. Instinctively my hand seeks the hand of the man that is laboring to lift the shadows of theological bigotry and let the people out into the beneficent air and sunlight of Free-thinking.

I have received the copies of the Blue Grass Blade and am pleased and gratified to note the improvement in form and general appearance, but more to find the reading matter more varied and of a much higher order than formally. Your portraits and biographical sketches of Stephen Girard and Chas. Bradlaugh were fine. Two great men worthy to be associated with our loved and lost Robert G. Ingersoll, greater and grander than Kings or Warriors or Popes or Priests or Saints or Apostles.

But now I am seventy-six years old, eyes failing, money nearly gone, dropping off several of my papers because I could not read them, only the desire left to help the Cause and a keen sympathy for those who are "rowing against the tide and doing what they can for the spread of the glorious Gospel of Naturalism. I cannot do all I would be glad to do, viz.: take all the Free-thought papers printed for all have some merit. Would it help you or hinder you if I sent you \$1.50 for a year's subscription and probably send another for another year if I lived? If so drop me a line, of course will take pains to get you others.—E. A. FITCH.

Joins the School.

SPOKANE, WASH.—I have a daughter, fifteen years old, who is past the eighth grade and you can put her down for a scholarship in your school. Her name is Bessie Gedder.—James Gedder.

Argument By Fire.

GONZALES, Tex.—With all my heart I release the In Gods we Trust, to you. Please move me up one more ring and

BLUE GRASS BLADE.

send the Blade that cuts down superstition, to another name that I'll mention later. I have been trying very hard to get another subscriber but so far have failed. From the best information that I can get the preachers here have introduced a move to burn all printed matter at sight, that is against the propaganda of Christianity, and their flocks are carrying it out to a letter. My plan is to have all the good Freethought books and papers that I can afford in the house all the time, so the children can have free use to them and all company can see them. I like the changes that you have made in the Blue Grass Blade from time to time only one, I think the date ought to be E. M., 308. I was sorry that you made that change, that would cause people to ask questions and then they might be enlightened.

E. M. THOMPSON.

Just Bet It Is Running.

HAVOVER, IND.—Is the Blue Grass Blade still published. If so please send me sample copy and the price of subscription for one year.—F. M. Fisher.

The Cost of Religion.

PERRIS, CAL.—I do not know that I can offer anything for the increase of the Blue Grass Blade better than a brief report of current events in order that it will be read by others than Freethinkers. Also the cost of maintaining religion denomination kept in standing column. I recollect seeing the statement of the city of New York spending \$80,000 yearly on churches, one-half of which would relieve the poverty that exists in the city almost continually. 150,000 preachers and their families support is what the country pays for a lot of men to do their thinking for them. Free thinking is less expensive.

C. S. GOVE.

In Memoriam.

LORENA, TEXAS.—I feel it my duty, (sad as it is), to write you of the death of my old Uncle David Mayberry, of Prairie Grove, Arkansas, who loved the Blade and wrote you this spring that he was broke down and too poor to pay for the Blade—but could not order it discontinued—you made out his name as Mahony, (see January 19th,) and you kindly continued the Blade. He was struck with apoplexy on Sunday the 5th inst. and died Monday evening the 6th, aged 78, never regaining consciousness—his request a few days before his death was "that no religious services was to be held over his body"—which my aunt informs me was complied with—only a neighbor friend made a short

talk at the grave—see next number of Searchlight—he died as he lived an outspoken, honest Atheist, and died as he often wished he might—viz.: "just go to sleep and never wake."

He was for many years a Methodist preacher, but from reading the Independent Pulpit and Ingersoll's writings he became a Liberal and has been such for twenty-three years.—D. F. MARRS.

How Bryan Has Fallen.

BRUNSWICK, MAINE.—The two papers I got this A. M., for which I sincerely thank you. Mr. Ham loaned me his copy, and by some way or other it has been lost, it will turn up sometime I think. Enclosed I send you one dollar for which to pay for them, the remainder you will use as you wish. April 15th. Here I was interrupted and will try to finish now. This is the great Convention time. Twice I voted for Mr. Bryan, I shall not vote for him this time, if he should get the nomination. It looks to me as though he had been after the Christian element of the country. I thought he had more common sense. He joins a church and not know what he was joining! never read the laws, rules and regulations of the church! And he would advise other young people to do the same, of course. O. Bryan, "how art thou fallen!"—J. S. CURTIS.

Almost a Centenarian.

BOSTON, MASS.—I have been highly gratified at reviewing your interesting and able paper. As it shows me that there is a rousing all over the country for Free-thought within outspoken declaration against the silly fanaticism of the credulous public on religious subjects. I have done what my limited means would justify in writing and publishing a large edition of the book I send you herewith notice of. I regret my inability to aid in the dissemination of all the liberal literature published. I am now in my ninety-seventh year and consequently too old to give much aid to the cause that lies so near my heart.

J. J. GREENOUGH.

PROF. T. B. WAKEMAN'S

NEW PRAYER

In the last issue of the Open Court, published at Chicago, appeared the following verses from the pen of Prof. Thaddeus Burr Wakeman, the well known Liberal thinker and philosopher. Through the medium of an appended note Prof. Wakeman suggests that it is designed to supplement what is known as the Lord's prayer,

now used by Christian worshippers, but the Blade is at a loss to comprehend the exact meaning, intention and purpose of the distinguished scientist. The verses border upon the mystical, the metaphysical, although one readily detects the design upon a "Republic of Man" so persistently advocated by Prof. Wakeman.

Although the Blade takes pleasure in reproducing such a poem from Prof. Wakeman, we are impelled to express our wonder and make inquiry into the full meaning of the text. The "Prayer" as Prof. Wakeman terms it, reads as follows:

THE HUMAN PRAYER.

(By Prof. T. B. Wakeman.)

O World, O Man, and Soul of Me—
The Endless All, Our Three in One!
O let me live with love and joy—
In Thee—In Thee!

So may I do for human kind
All each should do in turn for me;
So duty meet with honest deeds
And noblest mind.

O let me learn to know Thee True,
So that my life may do The Good,—
So that my work may fruitful be
The Ages through!

Thus may my Will as Thine be done,
And so fulfill our highest end—
As I in Thee shall ever live,
And work as one!

So bring our Republic of Man,
Our Paradise of Earth to be,
For each and All—for Me and All,
As best we can!
So on and on!—For evermore.
Amen—Amen.

Overheard in St. James Park, on the newly opened grass:—First Little Girl: "No, I don't give my dolly no medicine. She is a Christian Scientist." Second Little Girl: "Well, I s'pose it's all right to be a Christian Scientist when you've nothing but sawdust in your stummick." before closing his petition said:

"And please, God, make me a good boy." He paused a moment, and then, to the utter consternation of his mother, concluded with unabated gravity: "Nevertheless, not my will, O Lord, but thine be done!"

If you were going to move to a mountain you would do it in sections, yet when it comes to moving humanity from a lower to a higher state you go about it as if mankind were a basket of eggs.

BOOK REVIEW.
"SIDEREAL SIDELIGHTS"

It has been well said that "variety is the spice of life" and from a perusal of the interesting pages of Sidereal Sidelights, a Medley of Dawn-Thoughts, by Charles L. Brewer, it is evident that the author believed and wrote on the notion that "variety" was also the spice of progressive literature.

The Blade is in receipt of a copy through the courtesy of The Balance Publishing Co., of Denver, Colorado, publishers, and it is well printed, in a fascinating style, and is being sold for the modest sum of 50 cents. It is just what is implied by its nomenclature, namely, a "medley" consisting of both poetry and prose, touching upon a number of different topics connected with the progressive thought of the day. Its range is ample, covering the field of sociology, with flashes of philosophy and a touch of mysticism which gives a charm to the thread of its stories. The whole is an impressive dwelling upon the Humanitarian impulse, holding that if there be any element of so-called divinity in the universe it must exist within and as a part of Humanity. It is well worth reading and ought to have a wide circulation. No book can please every reader who may glance over its pages, but the one now under review is calculated to please the majority of thinking people and this is a victory in current literature.

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—GOETHE

Atheism and fanaticism are the two poles of a universe of confusion and horror. The narrow zone of virtue is between those two. March with a firm step in that path; believe in God and do good.
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